

Frequently-asked Questions

Where can I get a Comfort One enrollment forms and bracelet?

Contact your doctor to obtain patient enrollment information and forms. There is no charge for the enrollment forms but there is a nominal fee for the bracelet, which your doctor can order for you from your Regional Emergency Medical Services Office.

I am a Comfort One patient. What if I am choking or get into a car accident? Will I be allowed to just die?

No. EMS personnel will assess and treat you using standard procedures. For example, if you are choking, they will attempt to remove the obstruction and restore normal breathing, or if you are injured in a car accident or slip and fall in your home, they will treat you following standard medical procedures. If your heart stops beating, however, they will not resuscitate you.

I am not terminally ill; however, I have many health conditions and don't want to be resuscitated if my heart stops. Do I qualify for the program?

No. To qualify for the Alaska Comfort One Program, you must have a qualifying condition which includes permanent unconsciousness or an incurable or irreversible illness or injury that, without administration of life-sustaining procedures, will result in death in a short period of time.

What if my doctor enrolls me in Comfort One and I change my mind?

You can revoke your Comfort One status at any time by destroying the enrollment form and wallet card or by returning the enrollment forms and bracelet to your doctor for proper disposal. If you choose to revoke, please contact your physician or other health care provider and request him or her to contact emergency dispatch and any other agency which has been given a copy of the enrollment form. If EMS is called and at the last minute you change your mind, tell them you have changed your mind. If you are unconscious and have not communicated your intention to revoke your Comfort One status, unless a physician revokes the order, EMS personnel will not resuscitate you, and you will be allowed to die in the natural course of your illness.

My family and friends know I don't want to be resuscitated if my heart stops beating. If I am not enrolled in the Comfort One program but my family or friends tell EMS at the scene of an emergency that I don't wish to be resuscitated, won't that be sufficient?

No. You must have a Comfort One form, wallet card or bracelet with you.

What happens if I am unable to sign the Comfort One form?

AS 13.52.065 states that a physician may issue a Do Not Resuscitate order (DNR) for a patient and must document the grounds for the order in the patient's medical file. It is not necessary for you to sign, if you are unable to do so.

I have a Living Will. Why do I need a DNR?

A do-not-resuscitate order is different from an advanced care directive, sometimes called a 'living will'. A living will is designed to allow the patient to express his or her wishes regarding life-sustaining treatments and other medical care when he or she is unable to make treatment decisions; however, it does not go into effect until the patient has been determined to be in a terminal condition or permanent unconsciousness by a physician and is unable to make treatment decisions. EMS personnel cannot honor an advanced care directive or living will unless there is a Comfort One order in place and they are presented with the enrollment form, wallet card or bracelet.

Can a Comfort One order be entered for a child?

Yes. Although it may be an emotionally difficult situation, health care providers are required to honor a Comfort One order for a child to the same extent that they must honor one for an adult.